IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 31 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein. Please amend Claim 10 as shown below.

1 to 9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a powder material comprised mainly of a compound which electrochemically intercalates and deintercalates a lithium ion and contains at least an oxygen element, a sulfur element and at least one transition metal element, the process comprising at least one step selected from a group consisting of:

(I) a step ~~I) a step~~ of heating at least one compound (a) selected from a group consisting of carbonates, organic carboxylates, nitrates, hydroxides and oxides of transition metals, and a sulfur compound (b) which forms hydrogen sulfide or sulfur, in a closed vessel;

(II) a step ~~II) a step~~ of heating at least one compound (c) selected from a group consisting of sulfides, thiocarbonates, thiosulfates, thiocyanates, thioglicolates and thiourea complexes of transition metals and at least one compound (d) selected from a group consisting of carbonates, carbonic acid, organic carboxylates, organic carboxylic acids, nitrates, nitric acid, hydroxides and oxides, which contains no transition metal element, in a closed vessel; and

(III) a step of heating at least one compound (a) selected from a group consisting of carbonates, organic carboxylates, nitrates, hydroxides and oxides of transition

metals and at least one compound (c) selected from a group consisting of sulfides, thiocarbonates, thiosulfates, thiocyanates, thioglicolates and thiourea complexes of transition metals in a closed vessel.

11. (Original) The process according to Claim 10, wherein in each of the steps (I) to (III), a compound containing at least a lithium element is added to any of the respective compounds, followed by heating the resultant mixture in the closed vessel.

12. (Original) The process according to Claim 11, wherein at least one compound selected from a group consisting of lithium hydroxide, lithium oxide and lithium sulfide is used as the compound containing at least a lithium element in each of the steps (I) to (III).

13. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 10, which comprises a step of mixing the compounds to be used by means of physical energy prior to the step (I), (II) or (III).

14. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 13, wherein the step of mixing the compounds to be used is a step of grinding and mixing them by means of a grinding machine.

15. (Original) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the heating in

the closed vessel in each of the steps (I) to (III) is conducted under a pressure of 1.0 to 300 kg/cm^2.

16. (Original) The process according to Claim 15, wherein the heating under pressure is conducted under a pressure of 2 to 200 kg/cm^2.

17. (Original) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the heating in the closed vessel in each of the steps (I) to (III) is conducted at 100 to 800°C.

18. (Original) The process according to Claim 17, wherein the heating in the closed vessel is conducted at 130 to 400°C.

19. (Original) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the heating in the closed vessel is a step of heating the respective compounds in a solvent.

20. (Original) The process according to Claim 19, wherein the solvent is water.

21. (Original) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the heating in the closed vessel is a step of heating the respective compounds in an atmosphere comprised of at least one kind of gas selected from a group consisting of nitrogen, oxygen, air, sulfur dioxide, sulfur monoxide, hydrogen sulfide, and inert gases such as argon and helium.

22. (Original) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the compound (b) which forms hydrogen sulfide or sulfur is a compound which forms hydrogen sulfide or sulfur upon heating.

23. (Original) The process according to Claim 22, wherein the compound (b) which forms hydrogen sulfide or sulfur is at least one compound selected from a group consisting of thioamides, thiocarbonic acid and derivatives thereof, and thiosulfuric acid and derivatives thereof.

24. (Original) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the compound (b) which forms hydrogen sulfide or sulfur is an alkali metal sulfide.

25. (Original) The process according to Claim 24, wherein the alkali metal sulfide is lithium sulfide.

26. (Original) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the compound (a) is at least one compound selected from a group consisting of hydroxides and oxides of transition metals.

27. (Original) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the compound (c) is at least one compound selected from a group consisting of sulfides, thiocarbonates and thiosulfates of transition metals.

28. (Original) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the compound (d) is at least one compound selected from a group consisting of hydroxides and oxides, which contains no transition metal element.

29. (Original) The process according to Claim 28, wherein the compound (d) is lithium hydroxide.

30 to 31. (Cancelled)

32. (Previously Presented) A process for producing an electrode structure for a battery utilizing the intercalation and deintercalation reaction of a lithium ion, the process comprising the steps of:

preparing a powder material, which electrochemically intercalates and deintercalates a lithium ion and contains at least an oxygen element, a sulfur element and at least one transition metal element, in accordance with the preparation process according to any one of Claims 10 through 29; and

molding the powder material to obtain an electrode structure.

33. (Cancelled)